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Hardin's Lucky Thirteen.

HOW THE OLD MAN STRUCK IT RICH IN TWO-BIT GULCH.

EVERYBODY who knows the mining camps of South Dakota knows Two-Bit Gulch. It is in the head of the Black Hills, about 2½ miles southeast of Deadwood. Near it are mines that have made that country famous and their owners rich beyond the telling. Two and a half miles west of the Gulch is the Homestead, the richest gold mine in the world. About the same distance to the south of it are the Wasp, Two Bear and Golden Crest mines, and a little more than three miles to the north are the Polo Creek mines. Each of these mines has its story, told so often by the argonauts of the Hills that the tales have become part of history's memorial of the gold fields.

In all the fact and fiction of American mining comps, however, there is nothing more romantic than the history of Two-Bit Gulch. And there is no better illustration of what tenaciously sticking to one thing will do for a man than is to be found in the life of old Jim Hardin, who is as much a part of Two-Bit as Two-Bit is a part of the Black Hills. The history of the Gulch and the man shows, moreover, that 13 is not always a hoodoo. Had it not been for the wonderful happenings in the Gulch during the past few months, little, perchance, would have been known of Two-Bit's history or of the history of Hardin, who for 20 years has seen miners stake out claims near his own, only to abandon them for other and richer ones, leaving the pioneer of the Gulch undisturbed in his faith that if he waited long enough he would find riches where he and others had all but starved. Very few know the story even now, for those who know it best are disinclined to say much about it, and it now finds its way into print for the first time.

Twenty years ago, when the news of rich finds of gold were attracting men to the Black Hills, James D. Hardin followed the trail that others had beaten from southern Colorado to the hills. He had not concluded hastily to follow the fortunes of a miner, and when he did start out, therefore, he burned all his bridges behind him. He was not a young man then, and he had a wife and two young sons. These he took with him. Once in the hills, Hardin prospected for a time, and finally dropped down in Two-Bit Gulch. The place was a little ravine among the hills, through which wandered a creek. A few miners' cabins and a place where bad whisky was sold, dignified by the appelation of hotel, was all there was to remind one that the Gulch was a place of human habitation.

It was called Two-Bit Gulch because a disgusted miner had once said that a claim there might be worked for a month and not more than two bits (25 cents) would be realized from the labor. Such a prospect didn't discourage Hardin, however. There was water there and game not far away to be had for the shooting, and so he staked out a claim on the banks of the creek, built a cabin for his family, and went to work at placer mining. It was not easy work, and the gold that he washed yielded only a bare living. Hardin kept at it, however, and as his two boys grew older they took their hand at the pan.

In other parts of the hills rich strikes were reported from time to time, and Hardin's neighbors pulled up stakes and went in the direction from whence the reports came. Hardin was popular in the Gulch, because he was fearless and because he was honest. Therefore, when the other miners went where fortune's smiles were said to be kindlier they tried to persuade Hardin to go with them. But he only shook his head, making to all the same reply:

"No; I'm going to stick by the Gulch. She's given me a living so far, and I guess more'n that wouldn't be of much use anywhere. You go along, though, boys, and better luck to you than you found here."

And so they went. When they had gone Hardin, growing older and grayer with the years, appropriated the claims of the deserters and added them to his own. After a time Hardin became possessed in this way of a great part of all the land in the Gulch. When asked what he expected to do with his holdings, he would say:

"Some day I'll strike a lead that will astonish some folks. Then Jim Hardin will be called a wise man for sticking to Two Bit."

To all who asked him to leave the Gulch and seek a new field, Hardin's answer was always the same. Those who heard it felt a kindly sympathy for the old man, but they tapped their heads and looked knowingly at one another. What he said was considered by the miners as the harmless ravings of a man who had gradually lost his mind in the years that he had washed gold by the side of the creek that flowed through the gulch. In time, Hardin became known all through the hills as "Crazy Jim Hardin of Two-Bit Gulch."

Things continued thus until finally old man Hardin was obliged to sacrifice a part of his property to satisfy a small claim that a man in Deadwood held against him. This came near breaking the old man's heart. For a long time afterward he couldn't sleep at night. The fact that he had to give up a part of his holdings didn't bother the old man so much as the possibility that upon the part sacrificed might be discovered the untold riches that he was sure lay beneath the surface in the vicinity of Two-Bit Gulch.

"If I could only get a little money to dig with," Hardin would say, "I could strike the vein. I know where it is and there is gold by the ton there if I only had the money to dig it out."

This was the burden of the old man's talk, day in and day out. He would repeat it to anyone who would listen, and then the report went flying among the hills that "poor Jim Hardin had gone clean daft." His family, however, shared Hardin's faith in Two-Bit, and finally, one day in February, 1896, the old man's elder son, James D. Hardin, Jr., met in Deadwood a man from Chicago, named Edward Rotherwell, who had been commissioned by Philip D. Armour to examine some fuller's earth properties in Deadwood. When Rotherwell finished the work which took him to Deadwood he was induced by the younger Hardin to visit Two-Bit Gulch.

Rotherwell knew something about mining, and, having met old man Hardin, became convinced that the man was honest and was not crazy, or, if he was, young Hardin, who had the faith in the Gulch that his father had, was not only not crazy, but was an unusually level-headed man. Rotherwell examined the surface indications which old Jim Hardin pointed out to him, and was favorably impressed by them. Then, too, he believed in the Hardins, and the upshot of it all was that he promised to see what could be done about raising some money for the old man in Chicago.

This was no easy task. Chicago men with money were not exchanging it for an old Black Hills miner's gold bricks, even if he had been able to impress Rotherwell with his honesty and sincerity. Finally Rotherwell succeeded in interesting a young Chicago man by the name of Delaney. Delaney had plenty of money, most of which he had made himself, and he was highly esteemed by many of Chicago's best-known business men. Delaney visited Two-Bit Gulch with a mining expert, who was favorably impressed with what he saw. With the expert's report Delaney returned to Chicago and told some of his friends that he was going to invest some money in mining properties in Two-Bit Gulch. Philip D. Armour, L. Z. Leiter and two or three other Chicago millionaires consented to put in as much as Delaney, which was not so much but that each one of the men could afford to lose it if Two-Bit gave back nothing.

Young Hardin was sent for to come to Chicago and was told what Delaney had done. The son of the old miner could hardly believe his ears. The only thing he seemed to realize was the fabulous fortune that was all but within his father's grasp. The possibility that no gold might be found never occurred to him for a moment. This impressed itself upon those who had consented to invest some money in the scheme and they resolved to go ahead, come what might.

That was in the early part of the present year. Soon after that the machinery necessary to carry on quartz mining was ordered and shipped to Two-Bit. When the first machinery arrived old man Hardin nearly did go crazy with joy. That for which he had waited and worked and stuck to the Gulch all through the years was about to become fact instead of an old man's dream. When the machinery was all on the spot, the question to be determined was where the first shaft should be sunk. Old Jim knew, he said, exactly where to begin, but before he would tell he wanted to have a look at every man who was to engage in the work. When asked what that was for, he said:

"I've stood guard over this property for 20 years. Men have come and gone, but I've stayed on, and now that something's going to happen, I want to know that everybody around here is on the square. I can tell the men I want as soon as I see them."

Accordingly all the miners and all the bosses had to be inspected by Old Jim. All but two passed muster, and they had been employed to superintend parts of the work. The old man would not have them under any consideration, and two others of his own selection were substituted. The wisdom of his judgment may have been proved by the fact that one of these cast-offs is now in a western penitentiary serving a term for robbery.

When the mining crew was finally selected Old Man Hardin indicated the place where the work was to be begun and the first shaft was sunk on April 13, 1897. Some one recalled that work had been begun on the thirteenth of the month and remarked that Jim Hardin's usual luck would follow the development of the mine. To this Hardin's only reply was:

"There never was a fine field of corn that crows didn't croak over. Never mind the day of the month. Two-Bit will prove that there's luck in the thirteen yet."

Two months later, on June 13, "peanut" rock was struck and the first positive indication of ore was found. On September 13 the following dispatch was sent by James D. Hardin, Jr., to Mr. Delaney in Chicago.

"Rich ore struck. Assay, 31 to ton. Vein now more than 20 feet thick."

On October 13 samples of the ore taken from the mine were sent to Torrey & Eaton, assayers and metallurgists, of Sterling, N. J., whose New York office is at 74 Cortlandt street. Two days later they sent back the result of their assay, as follows:

"Sample of ore marked No. 1 pyrites, contains 1.50 ounces of gold, which assayed $31 per ton. Of silver there was a trace."

Two-Bit Gulch is no longer despised by the miners of the Black Hills. Two of those who left their claims there years ago for others are no richer today than they were then. The man who stuck there is a millionaire now, and his holdings could not be purchased for love or money. He has already paid back those who advanced him the money to develop his properties, and "Lucky Thirteen," as the mine is called, is yielding up its wealth to make easy the last years of old Jim Hardin's journey down the slope.—N. Y. Sun

WAS A GIZZARD.

The Young Anatomist's Opinion of the Vermiform Appendix.

Relief is at hand. The reign of the deadly appendicitis terror is nearing an end. According to a theory propounded to me yesterday, the vermiform appendix is rapidly disappearing from the human anatomy, and the next generation may be able to swallow anything from a peach kernel to a mustard seed without fear of consequences. Learned doctors may disagree with this theory, but my informant assures me that he has made a study of the matter and knows what he's talking about; he has read a number of medical books, knows something of the Darwinian idea and likes to think that he thinks.

"Whoever heard of appendicitis until quite recently?" began the savant. "Why, nobody. The general belief that it is an old disease with a new name is all tommyrot—I mean, is not supported by logic. It is a new disease, and it will probably never be known by another generation. The time is coming when no one will have an appendix; so, of course, no one will be troubled with appendicitis.

"My theory is as simple as can be," continued the anatomist, "and when you hear it you'll agree with me. All things are simple when once they are proven.

"What we now call the vermiform appendix was originally a digestive organ, or a large gizzard. The primeval man, as the result of incomplete evolution, was a great eater, and by no means careful of his diet. Moreover, his food was of the coarsest nature, the appendix or gizzard helping in the digestion or assimilation of food. As man progressed and became more refined in his habits, naturally the uses for which the appendix (or gizzard) was intended became less and less important. The other organs of digestion finally became all sufficient for general purposes, and the appendix (or gizzard) was thrown out of employment. Degeneration then set in from disuse and the gizzard dwindled into what was discovered a few years back to be vermiform appendix."

"Why was it," I asked, when I had sufficiently recovered from the scientific shower bath, "why was it that the amiable gizzard ultimately became a menace to peace and happiness?"

"That also is very simple. It follows from what I have said already. The original appendix—which was not an appendix at all, but a gizzard, as I have stated—was a large organ, capable of receiving and assimiliating the most indigestible substances. As the gizzard decreased in size, this cavity filled in until it has become so small that a minute substance, such as a grape seed, penetrating the appendix causes inflammation and often provides work for the surgeons and undertakers."

"I heard of a man whose grandfather died of appendicitis," I ventured.

"He was probably the victim of an erroneous diagnosis," replied the young man. Then he resumed:

"As I have said, the appendix is rapidly disappearing. The necessity for its creation has disappeared and the appendix must go. Advancing civilization is driving out the appendix just as the steam is giving place to electricity. The human gizzard is doomed. Hereafter only Thanksgiving turkeys and fried chickens will have gizzards."—Atlanta Journal.

EARTHQUAKE INSTRUMENTS.

Accuracy with Which They Record Upheavals.

Late in June last year we learned from our newspapers that a great disaster had taken place in North Japan, and that nearly 30,000 people had lost their lives. Seismograms taken in the Isle of Wight not only indicated how many maxima of motion had taken place, but showed that there had been an error in transmission of two days, the catastrophe having taken place on the evening of June 15, so that all who were to reach the stricken district after that date were in safety.

On August 31 of the same year the Isle of Wight records showed that a disturbance similar to that which occurred in Japan had taken place. On account of this similarity, it was stated that we would probably hear of a great earthquake having taken place in or near that country on the above date at 5:07 p. m. Four weeks later this was verified by mail. Another instance occurred some weeks later, when our newspapers announced that a great earthquake had taken place and several thousand lives had been lost in Kobe. No doubt those who had friends and property in that city were filled with anxiety. On this occasion the Isle of Wight instruments were still indicating that nothing of the magnitude described could have occurred. Later it was discovered that the telegram was devoid of all foundation.—Geographical Journal.

Another Year for the World.

The German meteorological prophet, Dr. Rudolph Falb, predicted some time ago the end of the world, as the result of the collision of our globe with Temple's comet on November 13, 1899. It is a comet which travels in the wake of the meteoric swarm of shooting stars, or the Leonide shower, which will be most intense in 1899, and the late Prof. Oppolzer, of Vienna, calculated its return for May, 1899, instead of November. De Falb's sinister prediction has caused Dr. Frederick Bidschof, first assistant at the Vienna observatory, to make a recalculation of the comet's course, with the reassuring result that on the day in 1899 when it will be nearest to the earth the distance will still be 18,000,000 kilometres, omitting the odd figures. He gravely assures us that this distance is sufficient for removing any alarm, and gives us further to understand that Herr Falb made an error in his logarithm.—London Standard.

—Don't swear to give up a bad habit and then keep on swearing.—Chicago News.

PARASITES PREY ON SEAL PUPS.

Cause of the Heavy Mortality on the Rookeries.

The fur seal pup is commonly a prey to a peculiar parasite—a blood-sucking worm which lodges in the intestines and sucks until the victim dies. Dr. Stejneger and Mr. Lucas, who were sent to the Pribyloff islands last summer by the Smithsonian institution, have brought back a lot of these worms in a bottle. They got them from the bodies of dead pups on the rookeries. Hence a very extraordinary discovery.

Large numbers of seal pups die annually on the rookeries from no apparent cause. Hitherto it has been taken for granted that they were killed by being stepped on by their parents, or by the fighting bulls. Now for the first time it is ascertained that this theory is wholly a mistake. The fact is that the pups are bled to death by the worms aforesaid. The parasites were found in the intestines of every dead pup examined by Mr. Lewis and Dr. Stejneger.

The discovery is due to Dr. Stiles, government specialist in animal parasites. He finds that the worms are practically the same as certain bloodsuckers which cause a dreadful disease in man. The disease is called "miners' anaemia," and is always fatal unless checked by proper remedial measures. The parasites, whether in man or in seal, fasten themselves upon the walls of the intestines and suck. They can be destroyed, however, by any efficient vermifuge, such as "thymol," and the patient quickly recovers health.

Here it has been suggested is a new and sure method of increasing the number of seals on the rookeries. The annual diminution by what was hitherto supposed to be trampling can be prevented entirely by administering a simple remedy to such of the pups as show signs of lack of vitality. There is no great difficulty in handling the pups on the rookeries, and native Aleuts, properly trained to the work, can go among them and pick out suspected cases, pouring down the throat of each a dose of vermifuge. Two or three doses will cure, and thus one important cause of the destruction of these valuable pinnipeds will be removed.

The worms do not multiply in the bodies of the seal pups. They lay eggs, however—more properly speaking, embryos—which are discharged by the animal. The pups scrambling around on the sand, swallow some of these eggs, which are hatched in the intestine, where the young worms at once take up the business of blood-sucking.

The disease called "miners' anaemia," caused by a parasite so nearly like as to be practically the same as the enemy of the seal pups, seems to have originated in Italy, and a few years ago it become epidemic among the laborers in the St. Gothard tunnel. It was doubtless introduced by Italian workmen who chanced to be infected with it, and lack of proper sanitary arrangements encouraged its spread. Many died of it. Recently three or four cases have appeared in the country, and it is predicted that the malady will surely appear in the coal mines of the United States before long, brought by immigrant miners. It has been making a good deal of trouble in Central America lately.

The parasites are threadlike worms about an inch long, and, as in the case of the seal pups, the eggs get into the body by accidental swallowing. Every time the creatures stop sucking at the walls of the intestine there is a little hemorrhage at the point attacked. Pretty soon the man becomes pale and thin, and he gets worse until death comes to his relief.

The same parasite, practically, though again a different species, attacked dogs. It is accountable for the fact that so many high-bred dogs in every litter are apt to die. The remedy is the same—namely, an efficient vermifuge.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

STOPPING A RAILWAY TRAIN.

A French Invention for Doing It Quickly.

Some time ago the French State railway gave a public trial to a new invention designed to effect automatically the stoppage of trains, with a view to prevent collisions, grade-crossing accidents, etc.

The experiments took place under the direction of M. Kaffas, the inventor, at Beaulieu le Ceudroy, near Chartres, before many railway engineers and a numerous gathering of scientists. Those present were convinced, so stated the published reports, that the apparatus fully satisfied all claimed for it.

The point chosen for the official experiment offered the greatest possible danger and difficulties. It was on a single track line, between Chartres and Orleans, at the point of divergence of the branch running to Asnieres, and immediately over a grade crossing.

There, at a distance of 250 yards from the station, the mechanism was placed in position. The invention consists of an immense hook or catch made of bent iron to which, while rigidly fastened to the rails, a current of electricity is supplied by a wire and lever from the station. While lying flat, trains pass over it readily, but when raised, it catches a lever hanging from the passing locomotive, the lever then automatically causing an air valve on the engine to open and the brakes to be immediately applied. At the trial of the device the train came to a standstill before reaching the station.—N. Y. Journal.

Fleet-Footed Zulus.

The rate at which the Zulus can travel upon emergency is astonishing. Some will cover as much as 50 miles in six hours. Eight miles an hour is an ordinary pace.—N. Y. Sun.

Considerate.

He—Why don't you say something about my mustache?

She—Because it seems like such a modest little thing.—Detroit Free Press.

PITH AND POINT.

—In Their Stateroom.—Brown—"Confound you, you're using my tooth-brush!" Sonderhausen—"I beg your pardon. I tinked it vos ze ship's."—Pick-Me-Up.

—He—"I told your father we expected to be married next month, and he was wild." She—"What did he say?" He—"He wanted to know why we couldn't make it next week."—Puck.

—"Shall we," he asked, "repair hence?" "Here," she answered, simply, for her tire was already punctured. In the meanwhile her kit comprised four caramels and a monkey-wrench.—Detroit Journal.

—"We had to let our glass-eater go." "What was the matter?" "Somebody got him to sign the pledge, and he got so stuck up he wouldn't eat anything but mineral water bottles."—Detroit Free Press.

—"I suppose classical music is all right in its place," said Maud. "I'm sure it is," replied Mamie; "I don't care to listen to it myself, but sometimes you have to play it in order to get a man to go home."—Washington Star.

—"Why," asked the curious person, "do you managers always take your shows out of town for their first performances?" "Because," said the manager, "we know that if an outside town will stand a show without killing the company, New York will be perfectly delighted with it."—Indianapolis Journal.

—"Shall we shoot or hang him?" asked the vigilantes. The methodical man of business paused to think. "Let us not be hasty," he said, "for hurry begets criminal waste and extravagance. The first thing to do is to learn the price of rope and compare it with the cost of ammunition."—Philadelphia North American.

AN EMPEROR'S DIETARY.

Description of Francis Joseph's Food and Kitchen.

The emperor of Austria is a pious Catholic who keeps as strictly on his fasts as he does on his early rising. On such days he abjures all meat and contents himself with fish—a dish that, like mutton, is a rarity in Vienna—and various kinds of omelettes. His majesty takes his fish preferably with buttered potatoes. His cuisine is peculiarly Viennese, and it is only at court and state dinners that the French menu has any chance. The Vienna kitchen is closely allied to the German in the simplicity and want of variety in the dishes, and by the "done-to-death" character of the meats, but is decidedly more tasty and inventive. "Kaiserschmarrn" and the dumpling-like "Knodel" having a world-wide celebrity. His majesty, like his subjects, prefers large helpings at the sacrifice of variety, and has a particular weakness for a dainty sort called "Frankforter mit Kreu." It may be called his specialty.

In summer the so-called second breakfast is omitted, and the emperor contents himself with the five o'clock breakfast, consisting of a cup of coffee and a little "kalte Auflage" (sliced cold sausage, ham, etc.) His majesty sticks to his desk for the next seven hours with scarcely an interruption. At noon comes the luncheon, or "Gabel-fruhstuck," consisting of a soup and a slice of roast. At half-past two is a dinner of six courses, comprising soup, fish, two roasts, pudding and a dessert. His majesty likes beer, but partakes of both beer and wine very sparingly, although the wine is changed for each cover. Liquors are also served. The emperor drinks preferably dark Bavarian beer; half a pint is his quantum. When he has risen from the table Kaiser Franz Joseph has finished his eating for the day and touches nothing more, even when in the evening he attends a theater. He is in bed by nine o'clock, and to his regular, moderate life he owes undoubtedly his longevity and splendid health and spirits.

That is how the emperor lives in winter, but the arrangements must necessarily undergo alteration on every occasion when a state function takes place. Then the splendor and lavishness of the imperial table knows no limits, and the fifteen covers hide titbits from every nationality, according to the tastes of the guests. But his majesty is only at home when his table is laden with the simple fare of his loyal "Burger." All the royal fruit and vegetables are grown in the country, except when the time of the year absolutely compels the purchase of these abroad. The wines are mostly Austrian or Hungarian, but also include Burgundies, Moselle, and Rhine wines, and Spanish sorts and champagne.

Next year at the jubilee exhibition the emperor intends to have the dishes cooked in the imperial kitchens and sold in the exhibition grounds. The public will thus, "for a consideration," be able to enjoy the piquant crumbs that fall from his majesty's table and sip the wines from the royal cellars. The proceeds will go to charitable purposes.—Vienna Cor. Pall Mall Gazette.

An Economical Empress.

The empress of China was to have celebrated her sixtieth birthday with great pomp and lavish expenditure of money in November, 1894. In consequence of the war with Japan she issued a proclamation that the festivities had been given up, because they would seem ungracious in view of the suffering caused by the war. This proclamation did much to endear her to the hearts of her subjects. This year the emperor decided to have the deferred festivities on November 3, and about $400,000 was put aside for the purpose; but again the empress gave her veto, on the ground that a better use might be made of that sum.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

A Beautiful Curve.

Afric's Queen—What did you do with the backbone of that bicyclist?

Afric's King—I made a bow out of it.—N. Y. Journal.

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

THE HOME FAIRY.

There's a funny little fairy
On his rounds by night and day,
And he goes about his errand
In a very funny way.
Such a tiny wand, so starry,
Bears he in his tiny hand,
And he visits every mansion,
Every cottage in the land.

Then he looks up in our faces,
With a quaint and quizzing eye,
When he finds them dark and frowning,
Off he goes without good-by.
But if sunny smiles and dimples
Meet his glance, to work he goes,
And before a body knows it,
Pop! he jumps astride our nose.

To our ears he creeps and whispers
Many sweet and lovely things,
In our eyes he scatters sunshine
From his pretty diamond wings.
Then he smooths away our wrinkles
With the dazzling wand he bears,
While he sings a song, so cheery,
That he lightens all our cares.

Oh, his task is never ended
Till the world in slumber lies!
Even then we dream so sweetly,
With his sunshine in our eyes.
Has he met you on his journey?
Listen while his name I tell,
He's the merry sprite "Good Nature,"
And I hope you know him well.
—George Cooper, in Golden Days.

LIVELY RUSSIAN GAME.

It Has an Unpronounceable Name, But It Looks Like Our "Tip Cat."

P. Kitty Kondacheff writes of "Some Russian Games" in St. Nicholas. One of them, bearing the name "Tchijick," is thus described:

The game is like your game "tip cat." The word Tchijick, properly translated, means "finch;" and whether the game is so called on account of the constant hopping of one of the players, or from the way in which the wooden "cone" is made to jump up and fly, is not known. The players may amount to any number, but five or six is the best combination, so as not to keep the others waiting too long while the "striker" and "hopper," as I will call them, are at work. A circle of about six feet in diameter is traced on the ground, in the center of which is deposited the so-called tchijick, or finch, a round stick of wood, six inches long, having each end shaped something like a cone. It is either placed across a small hollow in the ground, or with one end resting on a bit of stick or stone an inch or two high.

The players, armed with short, stout sticks, then draw lots so as to determine by chance who is to begin the first service, and who is to do the hopping; the others range themselves in order around the circle, the striker taking his place near the finch. The signal given, the striker serves the finch—that is, he gives it a smart rap with his stick over one end, so as to make it jump high up—and while in midair follows this with one or more sharp raps, sending it as far out of the circle as possible—the farther the better. The hopper then sets off, and must arrive at the exact place where the finch falls, hopping along on one foot. Lifting it up from the ground, he must send it back, with the aid of his stick, into the circle again. If it fall on the line, it is reckoned in. Should he fall in doing this, or in arriving safely on one foot to where the finch lies and back to his place again, he remains hopper to the next service. If, however, he passes both ordeals safely, he takes his place among the players again, while the striker turns hopper, the boy next in order taking his place.

The score is reckoned in the following way: A certain number is fixed upon previous to beginning the game—say, 25. Each time the striker hits the finch he scores one. Now, good players manage to touch it several times while in midair, short, jerky cuts from the wrist following swiftly on each other; sometimes as many as five raps are given in quick succession, the striker always remaining within the limits of the circle. He scores the number of raps given, and the player who first reaches the number previously agreed upon wins. The striker is thus changed after each service, while the hopper, unless he has good muscles and a sure aim, often has to go through the hopping process during many turns, thereby sometimes missing his own turn of serving. If the stakes are nuts, candy, or anything of that sort, then each boy loses to the winner as many as are wanting in his score to make up the 25.

Hard on the Irishman.

Gentleman (to an Irishman)—Well, Pat, I see you have a small garden.

Pat—Yes, sir.

"What are you going to set in it for next season?"

"Nothing, sir. I set it with potatoes last year, and not one of them came up."

"That's strange. How do you explain it?"

"Well, sir, the man next door to me set his garden full of onions."

"Well, had that anything to do with your potatoes not growing?"

"Yes, sir. Bedad, the onions was that strong that my potatoes couldn't see to grow, for their eyes watering."—Answers.

Stopping a Crank's Squeak.

Ventriloquists are generally fond of joking. One of these gentry, on board a river steamboat, made friends with the engineer, and began to talk to him. Presently the engine began to creak, and the engineer oiled it. In a few minutes it creaked again, and the engineer doctored it again. Twice more the engine squeaked, and the man began to smell a rat. Pretty soon there was another squeak, when, slipping up behind the ventriloquist, the engineer squirted about half a pint of oil down his back, and then said, gravely: "There! I guess that crank won't squeak any more!"

What the Sun Said.

This morning the sun looked in at me,
And I guess he was shocked to see
Me in bed, 'cause he winked his eye, for true,
And said: "Why, I'm s'prised at you."
—Chicago Record.

A GIFT FOR MOTHER.

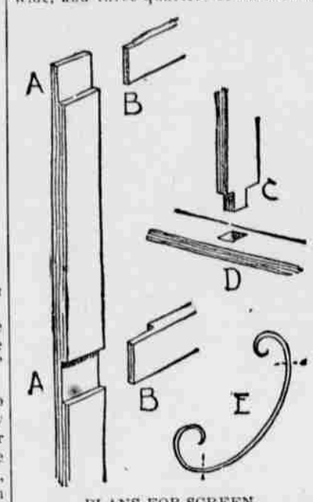
How to Make a Fire Screen That Will Prove Very Acceptable.

There are so many useful and acceptable presents that a boy can make for his parents, sisters or brothers, that is really quite unnecessary for him to lay out much money in gifts.

A very serviceable article for such purposes is the fire screen shown in the illustration, intended for an open fireplace, where it is often desirable to ward off the direct heat.

For ordinary uses this screen should be made 42 inches high and 40 inches wide; from the lower style of the frame to the floor the distance is 18 inches.

To begin with, obtain four pieces of wood, each 42 inches long, four inches wide, and three-quarters of an inch in



PLANS FOR SCREEN.

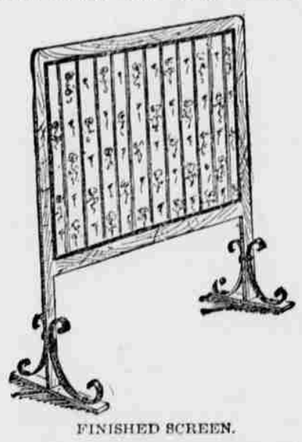
thickness, planed on all sides; also two pieces 14 inches long and of the same width and thickness as the long strips. These are for the feet, while the other pieces are to form the frame. In two of the long strips cut laps as shown in Fig. 1, A. At the ends of the other two, which are cut to a length of 40 inches, make lap cuts as shown at B. Secure these joints with glue and screws, so that a firm union will be the result, and at the bottom of each leg cut a tennon, as shown at C. In the center of the foot pieces cut mortise, as shown at D. The tennons can be cut with a chisel and saw, while the mortise should be made with a large bit and afterwards trimmed square with a sharp chisel.

Cut the parts accurately, so that they will fit snugly and make a good joint with glue. Then a long steel-wire nail can be driven through the edge of the foot-piece into the tennon, and into the other edge of the bottom piece. This nail—or a long slim screw, if you prefer—will give much additional strength to the union.

Have a blacksmith make four scroll brace-irons, curved at the ends and bent after the shape shown in E, which is a side view of a single brace. Where the dotted lines are drawn, quarter-inch holes should be bored to receive the screws that will fasten it to the woodwork. These braces should be made of tire iron one inch and a half in width and one-eighth of an inch in thickness.

If the wood selected is oak, ash, pine, white wood, or birch, and it is thought desirable to stain it before varnishing, a suitable stain can readily be obtained at a paint or hardware store and applied thinly with a brush; when dry, a coat or two of furniture varnish or hard oil finish can be laid over it.

The facing and backing may be of almost any pretty and durable material; but it must be of good body and not too thin. Figured denim, cretonne or tapestry cloth are excellent for this part of the screen, and they may be found in any large dry goods store.



FINISHED SCREEN.

Stretch the material on the framework, and tack it all around with fine tacks driven an inch apart; after trimming off the ragged edges, put a stiff gimp around the edge, and fasten it in place with large oval headed upholsterers' tacks, driven at regular intervals.

The appearance of the tack heads and the iron strap braces may be greatly improved by painting them dead black. Use two coats of ivory black, thinned with equal parts of japan dryer and spirits of turpentine.

The final result will be a very handsome little screen, sure to give pleasure to the recipient; and its usefulness cannot fail to be appreciated when it is placed before a hot fire on winter evenings.

J. HARRY ADAMS.

Feeding War Elephants.

Elephants in the Indian army are fed twice a day. When meal time arrives they are drawn up in line before a row of piles of food. Each animal's breakfast includes ten pounds of raw rice, done up in five two-pound packages. The rice is wrapped in leaves and then tied with grass. At the command: "Attention!" each elephant raises its trunk and a package is thrown into its capacious mouth. By this method of feeding not a single grain of rice is wasted.